

# **BOARD OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION MINUTES**

**July 7, 2016**

The Board of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (“Board”) met on July 7, 2016, beginning at 9:00 a.m. for a tour of the Meuer Farm located at N2564 US Hwy 151, Chilton, WI 53014. Following the tour, the Board held its business meeting in the Meuer Farm Activity Center. The meeting was preceded by public notice as required by s. 19.84, Stats.

## **Call to Order**

Board Chair Miranda Leis called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

## **Members Present**

Dennis Badtke, Miranda Leis, Greg Zwald, Paul Palmby, Nicole Hansen, Mark Schleitwiler, and Doug Wolf were present. Andy Diercks and Dean Strauss were absent.

## **Minutes**

## **Motion**

Nicole Hansen moved, and Greg Zwald seconded, a motion to approve the May 17, 2016, Board minutes. Motion approved unanimously.

## **Public Appearances**

**Representative Paul Tittl**, representative of the 25<sup>th</sup> Assembly District, welcomed the Board and thanked them for invite to participate in the tour and Board meeting.

## **Thanks**

On behalf of the Board, Board Chair Miranda Leis thanked the Meuer’s for allowing the Board to tour their farm and for hosting their July meeting. The Board enjoyed the tour and found it to be very educational.

### **Division 2015–2020 Strategic Plan Report**

Dr. Paul McGraw, Division Administrator for the Division of Animal Health, presented a PowerPoint report to the Board outlining the Division's 2015–2020 Strategic Plan.

### **Wisconsin Agriculture and Food Center Report**

Mark Weihing, Farm Center Team Lead from the Division of Agricultural Development, presented a report that provided highlights from the Wisconsin Agriculture and Food Center recent activities.

### **Land and Water Conservation Board Report**

Lynn Harrison, Vice-Chair of the Land and Water Conservation Board ("LWCB"), provided a report to the Board concerning the recent activities of the LWCB and upcoming challenges facing the LWCB.

### **ATCP 70/87–Maple Syrup Processing and Grading (Hearing Draft)**

Dr. Steve Ingham, Division Administrator for the Division of Food Safety, presented the Hearing Draft related to ch. ATCP 70/87.

#### **Motion**

Nicole Hansen moved, and Douglas Wolf seconded, a motion to approve the Hearing Draft of ch. ATCP 70/87. Motion approved unanimously.

### **ATCP 99–Grain Dealers and Warehouse Keepers Emergency Rule (Scope Statement)**

Jeremy McPherson, Business Trades Bureau Director within the Division of Trade and Consumer Protection, presented the emergency rule scope statement of ch. ATCP 99 to the Board.

#### **Motion**

Dennis Badtke moved, and Paul Palmby seconded, a motion to approve the emergency rule Scope Statement of ch. ATCP 99. Motion approved unanimously.

### **Consumer Protection Quarterly Report**

Division Administrator Frank Frassetto, of the Division of Trade and Consumer Protection, provided an update to the Board on the recent activities in the Bureau of Consumer Protection.

### **Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Services Report**

Greg Bussler, State Statistician, updated the Board on the recent production and price reports.

### **Website Revitalization Report**

Ashley Andre, Policy Initiatives Advisor for the Office of the Secretary, presented a PowerPoint report to the Board detailing the process completed to update the Department website and the final product.

### **Public Records Report**

Karley Downing, Chief Legal Counsel to the Department, presented a PowerPoint presentation to the Board outlining the public records law.

### **Board Member Reports**

**Dennis Badtke**—Dennis thanked Dave and Leslie Meuer for the excellent tour and for providing a delicious lunch. Dennis is looking forward to the land study of the southern part of state which should be complete by the end of the July. It appears there is still strength in the land market but variable prices are still being seen.

**Greg Zwald**—This past Tuesday, Greg was invited to participate in an on-air interview focusing on the Eat Local Tour for a nearby TV station. Greg enjoyed the seeing the behind-the-scene action of the TV station. Strawberry season is complete with a smaller crop produced than normal due to the frost that killed many of the early berries. On a positive note, Greg was able to sell all of his strawberry crop as the strawberry market has expanded this year.

**Mark Schleitwiler**—Mark recently returned from a trip to Montana where his daughter graduated from college and he was able to visit with family he has not seen in several years. At Belgioioso, work is starting to scale up in preparation for the fresh mozzarella season, which will reach its peak in two months. The new distribution center is halfway through construction with completion projected for the end of this year. Belgioioso has also begun planning for the next cheese factory production expansion.

**Miranda Leis**—Miranda thanked the Meuers for the interesting tour and appreciated the outreach effort that the family puts forth. She expressed the importance of progressive farmers showing the diversity and variety in farming with their farming techniques. The organic dairy market is beginning to see shifts in consumer demand, which is typical of a niche market. There appears to be too much supply but this can be difficult to forecast as milk supply waivers over the summer and throughout the country. The feed market experienced a strong harvest in the Midwest and domestic supply is strong. However, domestic prices are causing organic grain producers to see a narrowing of their profitability window. On the farm, Miranda and her family have harvested an abundant crop of alfalfa with a third crop on the way.

**Doug Wolf**—Doug thanked the Meuer family for the very enjoyable tour. It is a slow time on the farm now that crops are in, spraying is done, and hay is made, which allows more time to catch up on other items. His family is doing well.

**Paul Palmby**—Seneca Foods headed into their busy season with most of the planting done between rain showers. The late frost turned out not to be too destructive to the crops. Sweet cherry crop just went in the barn and the focus now is on harvesting peaches in California. Toward the end of July, Paul will be heading to Italy, Romania, and Bulgaria to meet with cherry suppliers and introduce to them to the Seneca Foods as sourcing options.

**Nicole Hansen**—Nicole thanked the Meuer family for the tour and for their demonstrated passion and dedication. The teaching that they provide to all their guests is a great asset to the agriculture industry. Nicole also thanked the Meuer's and the chef for the delicious lunch. Ocean Spray recently announced that sweet and dry cranberry products are considered a commodity, even though their demand remains high. The international Middle-East market has started to fluctuate due to civil unrest and many producers are getting out of the industry. At Cranberry Creek Cranberries, the cranberries are starting to blossom with the help of 2,900 honey bees and bumble bees that help in the pollination process. Soon the cranberries will move out of bloom and into fruit set.

### **Secretary's Report**

**Secretary Ben Brancel**—Each year, the Department recognizes one Employee of the Year from each of its six divisions to highlight in its Hall of Fame. This year's honorees were:

- Katy Vosburg of the Division of Agriculture Resource Management for her work developing electronic efficiencies in the Farmland Preservation Program.
- Brian Jorata of the Division of Food and Recreational Services for his work assisting food establishment operators to acquire the correct licenses they need for their business.
- Christine Stamm of the Division of Agricultural Development for her work supporting of the division programs, including Alice in Dairyland, and the International Agribusiness Center.

- David Sander of the Division of Trade and Consumer Protection for his work training and mentoring new Weights & Measures inspectors and developing procedures for hopper scale testing.
- Jason Mollett of the Division of Animal Health for his work developing efficiencies in division processes.
- Kathy Walker of the Division of Management Services for her work providing comprehensive support to the program that supports the Department's licensing processes.

The National Farm to Cafeteria Conference was held June 2-4 in Madison. More than 1,000 food service professionals, farmers, food producers, educators, early care and education providers, garden coordinators, and policy makers attended. The Department served as one of the co-hosts of this conference, which offered workshops, short courses, and field trips for participants.

Governor Walker led a trade mission to Mexico in early June. A delegation of Wisconsin companies and the Hoard's Dairyman editor traveled to Jalisco, Wisconsin's sister state, to participate in the meetings, exhibit at CIGAL Dairy Trade Show, and tour agriculture businesses. Mexico is Wisconsin's second most valuable agricultural export market.

The Midwest Association of State Departments of Agriculture ("MASDA") was held in Manhattan, Kansas in June. The annual event included the MASDA business meeting and the Food Export Midwest meeting. Presentation topics included transportation, water quality, research, Food Safety Modernization Act ("FSMA"), and animal disease response.

Deputy Secretary Jeff Lyon, on behalf of the Department, hosted a half-day meeting to better understand what environmental research is being conducted within the state, the results of that research, and the research needs of the agriculture community as it pertains to issues such as water quality, nutrient management, manure application, and cover crops. The meeting brought together representatives from the Universities and agriculture organizations.

Grassland Butter welcomed the Secretary for a tour of its processing facility, which receives more than five million pounds of milk daily. While there, Canadian trade issues were discussed. Canada is preparing to take steps to halt imports of ultra-filtered milk from the U.S., which Grassland is very concerned about.

Representative Jarchow invited the Secretary to a roundtable discussion at Burnett Dairy in Grantsburg in late May. The Secretary gave an overview of the Department's responsibilities. Other discussion topics included product labeling and food safety regulations.

In June, the Secretary attended the Walworth County Farm Technology Days media day, which serves as an event for media to tour the farm, interview Committee members, and get a preview of what is to come at the show. Farm Technology Days will be held July 19-21 at Snudden Farms in Lake Geneva. The Department will again have booths in the Family Living Tent, Education Station, and Progress Pavilion. The agency will highlight several different programs

including the Producer Led Watershed Protection Grants, Consumer Protection, and Animal Health.

Wisconsin recently celebrated June Dairy Month with events across the state. The Secretary attended dairy breakfasts in Marathon, Marquette, Sheboygan, and Racine Counties. Sheboygan County's dairy breakfast was hosted by Dean Strauss and Majestic Crossing Dairy.

Fair season has begun in Wisconsin. Throughout the summer the Secretary will travel to different fairs across the state. The Secretary attended the Elroy Fair to dedicate a new pavilion, which was dedicated to the memory of George Weber, who was a farmer and long-time fair volunteer.

### **Future Schedule and Agenda Items**

The Board is scheduled to meet September 8, 2016, at Seneca Foods, Janesville. The Board requested a future report on immigration labor, the commercial feed rule, a FSMA feed update, a Division of Food Safety update, and a report on the recommendation given to the Agricultural Producer Security Council.

### **Adjournment**

By unanimous consent, the Board adjourned at approximately 3:08 p.m.

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Miranda Leis, Board Chair

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Dennis Badtke, Secretary

All reports and any associated documents presented during a Board meeting can be accessed by contacting the Office the Secretary, Legal Counsel at (608) 224-5023.